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ABSTRACT

This book introduces beginning students of linguistics at all levels and general readers to the study of language, providing an overview of key topics and an explanation of basic terms and ideas. The book is also designed to encourage the reader to think about the way language works and reconsider some popular misconceptions about language and what linguists do. Chapter topics include: the uniqueness of human language; the grammatical backbone of language (English and other grammars); meaning and language; variation in language (geographic and other); language change over time; the interrelationship of language, mind, and neurological functions; language development and second language learning in children; and attitudes about language. Each chapter includes suggestions for additional reading, and a full bibliography is appended. (MSE)

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